

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE  
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**U.S. Outlines Process for Steel Safeguard Exclusions**

WASHINGTON - The Office of the US Trade Representative announced today that it is continuing to make progress in considering exclusions from the March 5 safeguard provision imposing temporary tariffs on steel imports. The government received more than 1,200 requests for certain steel products to be excluded from the safeguard measure.

“We are moving forward, in close communication with our industry, to consider the high volume of requests for exclusions,” said U.S. Trade Representative Robert B. Zoellick. “The exclusions we are granting are the result of a complex decision-making process in which we have balanced the needs of steel consumers and producers while continuing to preserve the integrity of the safeguard measure.”

The government already has granted 224 product exclusions that were announced on June 7, 17, and 24. These exclusions will become effective officially upon publication in the Federal Register, which is expected to occur in a few days. The administration has now processed all but a small handful of the original exclusion requests that were made prior to March 5. The few remaining pre-March 5 requests are undergoing further consideration.

Most of the exclusions – those not subject to a cap on the volume of imports – will be retroactive to March 20, the effective date of the safeguard measure. Duties collected on these products will be refunded. The effective date of the remaining exclusions will be announced in the Federal Register notice. Meanwhile, the USTR will be announcing shortly its plans for dealing with the remaining large volume of requests.

Under U.S. law or World Trade Organization (WTO) obligations, the government is not required to grant any product exclusions. However, when announcing the steel tariffs in March, President Bush directed the Department of Commerce and the Office of the United States Trade Representative to consider individual requests for product exclusions.

The exclusions granted so far cover a broad range of steel products and are based on requests from U.S. steel consumers as well as foreign steel producers. Each exclusion decision carefully balances domestic industry concerns against the need to ensure that the safeguard provision is not undermined.

A complete description of the excluded products will be published in the Federal Register. Lists and short descriptions of the products to be excluded can be found in the three product exclusion announcements of June 7, 17, and 24 on USTR's website: [www.ustr.gov](http://www.ustr.gov).

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